

In the Claims

33. (Currently amended) A method for announcing a key code to TV viewers via the screen of their TV set for use in establishing contact between selected viewers and an established game program over a telecommunication network, said method comprising the steps of:

generating said key code to include a plurality of descriptive elements, said key code being selected randomly among a predetermined number of different key codes through use of an automatically operating selection device;

transmitting said key code elements in succession to said TV screens within a plurality of selected time slots located within a plurality of selected time units between a start and an end of a TV transmission which is at least one of a TV program and a TV commercial spot, at least one of a duration of a time slot and a position of a time slot within a time unit being selected at random; and

providing access to the game program by a predetermined number of viewers who through use of the key code are first in managing to establish said contact with the game program.

34. Canceled

35. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 33, wherein said selection of said time slots incorporates the use of an automatically operating selection device.

36. Canceled

37. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 36, wherein said random selection is made by an automatically operating device.

38. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 33, wherein said viewer connection is made via one or more selected from the group consisting of a telephone network and a computer network.

39. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 33, wherein said descriptive elements each comprises one or more selected from the group consisting of symbols, numbers, and letters.

40. (Currently amended) A system for announcing a key code to TV viewers via the screen of their TV set for use in establishing contact between selected viewers and an established game program over a telecommunication network, said system comprising the steps of:

a key code generator for generating said key code to include a plurality of descriptive elements, said key code generator having means for selecting said key code randomly and automatically among a predetermined number of different key codes through use of an automatically operating key code selection device;

a key code transmitter for transmitting said key code elements in succession to said TV screens within a plurality of selected time slots located within a plurality of selected time units between a start and an end of a TV transmission which is at least one of a TV program and a TV commercial spot, and said key code generator being configured to communicate with a time slot generator to select at random within a time unit at least one of a duration of a time slot and a position of a time slot; and

a line connector for connection of viewers to said game program who are selected as a function of a predetermined number of viewers who by using the key code are first in managing manage to establish said contact.

41. Canceled

42. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 40, wherein the ~~key code transmitter comprises time slot generator~~ provides for an automatically operating time slot selection component.

43-44. Canceled

45. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 40, wherein said viewer connection is via a telephone network ~~and or a PC related data path in a computer communications network or both.~~

46. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 40, wherein said descriptive elements each comprises one or more from the group consisting of symbols, numbers, and letters.

47. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33 for announcing a key code ~~of claim 33~~ wherein the key code is a ~~PC related data path or telephone number.~~

48. (Currently amended) The system of claim 40 for announcing a key code, ~~of claim 40~~ wherein the key code is a ~~PC related data path or telephone number.~~

49. (New) The system of claim 40 wherein the key code generator is linked to a time unit generator which is configured to determine time units within which key code elements of a key code are to appear during a TV transmission.

50. (New) The system of claim 40 wherein the time unit generator provides for an automatically operating time unit selection .